

O 181248Z JAN 01  
FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8749  
INFO SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY BANGUI PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY KAMPALA PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY KIGALI PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR PRIORITY  
NSC WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 000328

KUALA LUMPUR PLEASE PASS TO AMBASSADOR WILLIAM LACY SWING

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/17/2010  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [CG](#)  
SUBJECT: GDRC ADMITS KABILA DEAD

CLASSIFIED BY CDA BARRIE WALKLEY FOR REASONS 1.5(B)(D)

11. (C) CHARGE, ALONG WITH FRENCH AND BELGIAN AMBASSADORS, WAS CONVOKED EARLY AFTERNOON OF JANUARY 18 FOR A MEETING WITH MWENZE KONGOLO (MINISTER OF JUSTICE), HENRI MOVA (MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT) AND MAWAMPANGA MWANA NANGA (MINISTER OF FISHERIES AND LIVESTOCK). AT THE BRIEF MEETING, MWENZE SAID HE WISHED TO INFORM THE US, BELGIUM AND FRANCE OF THE CURRENT STATE OF EVENTS AND TO REQUEST THE "UNDERSTANDING AND ASSISTANCE" OF THE DRC'S "CLOSE FRIENDS" AS THE COUNTRY GOES THROUGH A DIFFICULT PERIOD.

12. (C) MWENZE SAID THAT KABILA WAS HIT BY TWO BULLETS, ONE OF WHICH WAS EVENTUALLY FATAL. THE BULLET ENTERED THE SKULL NEAR THE EAR WENT DOWN THROUGH KABILA'S BODY AND CAME OUT NEAR THE ARM ON THE OPPOSITE SIDE (BY THE DESCRIPTION, IT APPEARS KABILA WAS PROBABLY SITTING DOWN AT THE TIME). KABILA WAS TAKEN IN A COMA TO HARARE, WHERE--ACCORDING TO MWENZE--HE DIED WEDNESDAY NIGHT. (NOTE: THIS ACCOUNT, IF THE GOVERNMENT STICKS TO IT, WOULD ALLOW THEM TO CLAIM THEY WERE TELLING THE TRUTH YESTERDAY NOON WHEN THE STATEMENT WAS ISSUED THAT HE WAS ALIVE.) THE ASSAILANT, MWENZE SAID, WAS KILLED.

13. (C) THE BODY, MWENZE ADDED, IS STILL IN HARARE AND ARRANGEMENTS ARE BEING MADE FOR ITS RETURN. A COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS IS WORKING ON FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS. MWENZE SAID HE COULD PROVIDE NO FURTHER DETAILS AT THE MOMENT AS DECISIONS WERE STILL BEING MADE.

14. (C) MWENZE INDICATED THAT AN OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT WILL BE MADE TODAY REGARDING THE DEATH AND HE CONFIRMED THAT JOSEPH KABILA WILL ADDRESS THE NATION TONIGHT (NOT A POLITICAL SPEECH, ACCORDING TO MWENZE, BUT A GENERAL SPEECH ABOUT CONDITIONS IN THE COUNTRY, INTENDED TO MAINTAIN CALM).

15. (C) MWENZE SAID THE GDRC DID NOT DEFINITELY KNOW WHO WAS BEHIND KABILA'S ASSASSINATION BUT ADDED THAT "WE ARE ON THE TRAIL." ASKED ABOUT REPORTS OF AN IMMINENT CABINET RESHUFFLE, HE SAID THAT IT WAS UNDER DISCUSSION BUT HE WASN'T FREE TO TALK ABOUT IT.

16. (C) CHARGE HAS BEEN CONVOKED FOR A MEETING THIS AFTERNOON WITH JOSEPH KABILA; MORE DETAILS MAY BE AVAILABLE AT THAT MEETING.

WALKLEY